



April 30, 2025

RE: Supplemental Information on Independence Classical Academy Extension Request

Independence Classical Academy (ICA) appreciates the collaboration and support that we have and continue to develop and enjoy with the Elizabeth School District (ESD). Specifically, ESD Board Members as well as Superintendent Snowberger have been instrumental in this process by providing needed guidance and material support through the district leadership, communication, maintenance, safety and security, and technology teams. In March, with contractor bids in hand, ICA was in the process of beginning renovations to the Frontier Center as ICA's investors had approved over \$150,000 in funds to ready the facility for use. Our recent request for an extension is a result of a set of unforeseen circumstances beyond our control and an inadequate amount of time to secure an alternative school location.

As indicated in my correspondence to you dated April 14, 2025, we are requesting an extension until Fall 2026 to open ICA. We were on track to open ICA for the 2025-2026 school year at the Frontier Center until we received an email from Superintendent Snowberger on March 25, 2025, stating that a roofing company indicated the roof deck on the Frontier Center had deteriorated and rotted. The roofing company believed upon inspection that the building "is likely to be condemned." It was also stated that the rough roof replacement costs were "estimated at \$1.2 million."

To date, we have not been able to independently verify these statements by the roofing company or the actual damage to the roof. In his email from April 28, Mr. Snowberger stated that the homeschool enrichment program that uses the Frontier Center "has started its efforts to raise funds to assist in the repair of the roof." ICA may also be able to contribute funds to the repair of the roof once more information is learned about the actual extent of the damage.

Once the initial report on the roof was given, the Frontier Center was shut down and all tenants, including ICA, were required to remove their belongings. This appeared to have been done in an abundance of caution until solid information about the roof could be obtained. Given the uncertainty about the Frontier Center, ICA began looking into many facilities throughout Elizabeth and in the surrounding communities, including some facilities that belonged to the school district. We were unable to find a suitable facility in the short time we had. The unexpected events described above created enough uncertainty that it seemed prudent to delay opening for one year.

We request that the Elizabeth School Board approve an extension on ICA's opening until Fall 2026. As indicated above, ICA would have opened the school on time if the unexpected Frontier situation had not occurred. In Mr. Snowberger's email of March 25, 2025 (referenced above), he indicated "I will keep you posted but recognize that this does throw a major wrench into the plans for next year." ICA has already made a substantial investment and is continuing to use resources, time and money, to bring a high performing classical charter school to the Elizabeth community consistent with the wishes of the Elizabeth



School Board and the Superintendent. It is important that ICA receive assurances from the Elizabeth School Board that it can move forward and open for the 2026-2027 school year.

On April 28, 2025, Mr. Snowberger sent an email to the Elizabeth School Board and the ICA School Board. In that email he indicated that no existing school classrooms can be designated to ICA for the 2026-2027 school year. As a result, we will withdraw the Singing Hills proposal and the Middle School proposal. At present, there are five viable facility options; they need to be fully vetted to determine the best facility for ICA to use for the 2026-2027 school year. We are actively reviewing these options.

- 1) **Frontier Center** – Once an estimate on repairing the leaky roof is obtained by the Elizabeth School District, the next course of action with this facility can be determined. As of the date of this letter, no estimates have yet been obtained by the Elizabeth School District.
- 2) **Independence Property Where the Permanent School Will be Located** – We can put modular classrooms at the permanent location in the Independence Community where ICA will eventually be located.
- 3) **Five Acre Parcel of Property that the Elizabeth School District will Maintain in Independence** – Discussions are already under way between ICA and the Elizabeth School District on coordinating efforts to set up a temporary location for ICA. Once ICA moves to its permanent facility, the Elizabeth School District will take over the facilities where it may provide services to the community such as early learning.
- 4) **Commercial Real Estate** – We have a commercial real estate professional looking for available commercial real estate in our community.
- 5) **Potential Use of Modular Classrooms at Running Creek Elementary** – These facilities would not rely on any interior space at Running Creek Elementary.

We appreciate the support and collaboration we have received from the ESD Board Members and Superintendent Snowberger and look forward to a continued mutually beneficial partnership. Just like ICA had successfully prepared to open for the 2025-2026 school year, we are confident that we will secure a school facility and be ready to open for the 2026-2027 school year.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Candy Putsch  
Board Chair  
Independence Classical Academy